

Message Text

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14

ACTION ARA-10

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INFO ALL CONSULATES IN MEXICO VIA POUCH

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, MX

SUBJECT: DISSIDENT ELECTRICAL WORKERS SET TO STRIKE

REF: MEXICO A-211

1. THE RAFAEL GALVAN-LED DISSIDENT ELECTRICAL WORKERS OF MEXICO'S MAJOR ELECTRICAL WORKERS UNION, SUTERM, ARE APPARENTLY RESIGNED TO GO AHEAD WITH AN ANNOUNCED STRIKE BEGINNING 6:00 P.M., FRIDAY, JULY 16. NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN SUTERM LEADERS AND GALVAN, WITH GOM OFFICIALS (ATTORNEY GENERAL OJEDA PAULLADA AND LABOR SECRETARY GALVEZ BETANCOURT) ACTING AS MEDIATORS, HAVE FAILED TO PRODUCE ANY PROGRESS WHICH WOULD AVERT A STRIKE.

2. OJEDA AND GALVEZ BETANCOURT MADE STATEMENTS TO PRESS JULY 15 THAT A STRIKE BY GALVAN'S "DEMOCRATIC TENDENCY" GROUP WOULD BE ILLEGAL AND SUBJECT TO PROSECUTION. THE FINDING OF ILLEGALITY IS BASED ON THE FACT THAT, AS A FACTION WITHIN SUTERM, THE GALVAN GROUP HAS NO LEGAL STANDING TO FILE A STRIKE PETITION. DESPITE THE SEEMINGLY CLEAR CUT NATURE OF THE LEGAL ISSUE INVOLVED, IT WAS NOT UNTIL JULY 15, THE DAY BEFORE THE STRIKE, THAT THE GOM PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED ITS DECISION, WHICH IT SAID HAD BEEN REACHED A MONTH AGO. GOM RETICENCE ON THIS FUNDAMENTAL POINT WAS PROBABLY INTENDED TO LEAVE AS MUCH NEGOTIATING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ROOM AS POSSIBLE WHILE DISCUSSIONS CONTINUED.

3. IN A FULL PAGE AD JULY 16, THE GALVAN GROUP FAULTS CTM LEADER FIDEL VELAZQUEZ WITH THE FAILURE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. GALVAN SUGGESTS THAT AN APPARENT WILLINGNESS OF THE GOM TO PROMOTE A PEACEFUL SOLUTION WAS VETOED BY VELAZQUEZ LIEUTENANTS ON INSTRUCTIONS BY VELAZQUEZ, WHO OVER THE PAST WEEK HAS TWICE SUGGESTED THAT THE CTM AND OTHER CONGRESS OF LABOR UNIONS (PRI UMBRELLA UNION ORGANIZATION) MIGHT START A GENERAL STRIKE FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY WAGE INCREASE. FACED WITH THIS THREAT, THE GALVAN GROUP SUGGESTS, THE GOM WAS UNABLE TO BRING ANY PRESSURE ON SUTERM LEADERS TO REACH AN ACCOMMODATION.

4. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, THE MEXICAN ARMY HAS ALREADY TAKEN UP POSITIONS IN INSTALLATIONS MOST LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED BY THE STRIKE -- GUADALAJARA, MONTERREY, SALTILLO, SAN LUIS POTOSI, CHIHUAHUA, TAMPICO, PUEBLA, AND AGUASCALIENTES.

5. COMMENT: THE REFERENCE AIRGRAM EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE GOM FACED THE PROBLEM OF DISSIDENT ELECTRICAL WORKERS WITH SOME AMBIVALENCE. ON THE ONE HAND, IT WOULD PROBABLY LIKE TO REDUCE THE RELATIVE INDEPENDENCE OF FIDEL VELAZQUEZ WITHIN THE POLITICAL ESTABLISHMENT AND MAY HAVE SEEN THE GALVAN CHALLENGE TO THE LEADERSHIP OF VELAZQUEZ' CRONIES IN SUTERM AS PROVIDING SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY. ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVING FAILED ONCE (IN 1972) IN A SIMILAR ATTEMPT, IT COULD HELP GALVEZ ONLY AT THE CONSIDERABLE RISK OF ANTAGONIZING VELAZQUEZ INTO HOSTILE ACTION (SUCH AS VELAZQUEZ HAS THREATENED) AND ITS ENCOURAGING MARXIST-LED INSURGENCIES ENTAILED ITS OWN RISKS. IT APPEARS IN THIS CASE THAT THE SUTERM LEADERSHIP, WITH THE FULL BACKING OF VELAZQUEZ AND THE ENTIRE PRI DOMINATED ORGANIZED LABOR, REFUSED TO MAKE ANY CONCESSIONS TO GALVAN, IN PART, BECAUSE ITS LEGAL POSITION WAS WATERTIGHT. FORCED TO TAKE A POSITION ON THE GALVAN STRIKE PETITION, THE GOM NECESSARILY FOUND IT ILLEGAL. THE GALVAN AD SUGGESTS THE DEMOCRATIC TENDENCY IS "PREPARED TO PAY THE PRICE OF ITS UNDERTAKING", I.E. IT'S PREPARED TO BE JAILED AND PROSECUTED. THE GOM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WOULD PROBABLY PREFER NOT TO HAVE TO REPRESS THE GALVAN MOVEMENT AND MAY STILL BE LOOKING FOR A WAY OUT, BUT IT MAY HAVE NO OTHER OPTION LEFT.
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